



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **12/11/12 Minutes**

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 @ 7:00 PM

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, December 11, 2012.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Don Vitters, Jen Rothenberg and Jim Robillard. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Wes Beal, Lori Kennedy, Molly Flueckiger, Karin Turer, Andrew Leonard, Ellen Torres and Mustafa Varoglu.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Vitters motioned to approve, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 5-0.

### **Open Forum – Public Comments**

N/A

### **Commission Policy on Toys in Playground/Status of Magnolia Park Pilot**

The Town continues to receive complaints about toys being left at Magnolia Park and asked representatives of the Friends group to discuss. Ms. Lori Kennedy from Friends of Magnolia Park was present. She stated that there is confusion about the toy policy because there is not enough signage. She also recommended putting some toy corrals by the swing set. Ms. Kennedy spoke of some ill will among parents toward the Recreation Department with regard to improvements at the park, which they feel are lacking. She also stated that the Friends do weed out toys periodically.

Mr. Connelly will look into getting language for additional signage. The toy policy is town-wide and any posted signs must take this into account.

Mr. Connelly stressed his concern with the types of toys and safety. He also stated that all toys that are not approved will need to be removed. Toys must be appropriate for outdoor use. There is a lot of opportunity for children to get hurt. Being a municipality, we have to abide by safety regulations.

Mr. Connelly offered again to work with the Friends to identify options for improvements. These could then be priced out and funding sources identified - possible fundraising or a capital request.

Ms. Rothenberg noted that the condition of the park can be an eye sore and can understand neighbors concerns. Ms. Mayer mentioned erosion under the safety surfacing where digging toys were left. Ms. Kennedy said the weather has caused the erosion. Ms. Mayer also stated the expectation that bins are located by the entrance so that they would be used to remove toys from play areas as people are leaving the park.

The Commission agreed to give the pilot a fair chance with provisions to improve signage and add bins. It was agreed that there will be a review of the policy in May.

Ms. Caniff motioned to approve, seconded by Mr. Vitters, and approved 5-0.

### **Capital Improvement Update**

**Thorndike Field OLRA Update (Stanton Foundation)** – The Thorndike OLRA is complete and looks fantastic. The correct pathway material is installed. The edging gives it a finished look and helps with a visual separation of path from stones. The shed was re-installed. Mr. Connelly stated that there was a question on maintaining the path, which is producing a lot of dust. Once

irrigation is turned on in the spring, there should not be any dust.

**Buck Field Renovation** – No change.

**Florence Avenue Playground** – A second public meeting was held, which went very well. Some great input and suggestions were discussed. This will give the landscape architect a vision. Another public meeting will be held at the beginning of the year.

**Poets Corner Master Plan** – Mr. Leonard looked at the property and recommends two plans be developed. There are questions regarding the 3.8 acres of town property, so in order to get more realistic pricing, a wetland and topographic survey need to be complete, as well as a soil study. Once all of these surveys are done, a meeting should be held with user groups and the neighborhood to get feedback. Mr. Leonard will create a few different scenarios for the Commission to consider before any next steps are determined. Since there are known wetland areas, Ms. Mayer suggested making contact with the Arlington Conservation Commission to get their input early on. Mr. Connelly agreed to reach out to Ms. Beckwith.

**Summer Street Field Netting** – The pilot has been approved. Mr. Connelly received a revised quotation of \$3,500 and will need to contact Republic electric to see about getting the installation cost. This is targeted for Spring.

**Rink Sign** – Dig Safe will be on site on Thursday, December 13, 2012. Installation of the sign is scheduled for the week of December 17, 2012

**Capital Request for FY 2014** – No changes.

**Picnic and Special Event Policy Review** – The commission agreed to vote on this in January

**Off Leash Dog Review – OLRA Winter Use Policy/Signage Feedback**

Mr. Connelly received emails requesting the Commission reconsider the Winter Use Policy and members of the public were present to discuss concerns. The current policy allows access to the OLRA (conditions permitting) from December 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> only through the entrance closest to the parking lot. This is an attempt to reduce the amount of potential gate repairs in the Spring. Having access through this gate is problematic for access to the small fenced area, which is closer to the other entrance and is used as a separation area.

Ms. Mayer acknowledged that if the second entrance gate is locked up, there would be no secondary egress, which was a request of the Arlington Police Dept. when the OLRA was designed. The Commission agreed to try to keep both gates open, but with the understanding that the OLRA may be closed at times if conditions are deemed to be unsafe.

Mr. Connelly received an email from Mr. Varoglu, who was in attendance. He was surprised and bothered by the low number of tickets that were issued in the past year, as he continues to see violations at Menotomy Rocks Park. He discussed incidents at MRP where he has been chased, while riding his bike, by dogs when they are legally off leash and stated that the owners do not have their dogs under voice control. He suggested putting a reminder in the Friends of Menotomy Newsletter and would like to see additional signs posted, especially at the entrances to the woods. He believes that MRP needs better enforcement. Ms. Mayer will draft a letter to Chief Ryan. Mr. Connelly will put up additional signage.

**Special Requests**

There were no special requests.

**Rink and Recreation Update**

No report.

**Committee Updates:**

**Portable Restrooms** – N/A

**Friends of Parks** – N/A

**Skateboard Park** – N/A

**Mill Brook Linear Park** – N/A

**Other Business**

**Recycling at town parks and fields** – Mr. Connelly is working with DPW to understand how recycling at Town parks and fields is being implemented.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:  
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation